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1. INFORMATION IN THIS MESSAGE FOR INTERNAL ☐ USE ONLY.
2. MACV J-2'S MOUNTAINOUS LABOR TO GIVE BIRTH TO NEW FIGURE STAFF STUDY CAME UP WITH FIGURE OF 185,400 "IRREGULARS," COMPRISED OF 60,750 GUERRILLAS AND 124,650 SELF-DEFENSE FORCES. SINCE THIS WOULD MEAN APPARENTLY SUDDEN JUMP OF OVER 60,000 IN ENEMY OB, WHICH HARD TO EXPLAIN ADEQUATELY TO HIGH LEVELS IN WASHINGTON AND TO PRESS, PAPER WAS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE OF COLONELS TO FIND WAY OUT OF DILEMMA. SOLUTION RATHER INGENIOUS AND, ON THE WHOLE, GENUINE IMPROVEMENT.
3. FOLLOWING IS CURRENT FORMAT FOR RECAPITULATION OF ENEMY STRENGTH IN SOUTH VIETNAM USING 22 MAY FIGURES:

MANEUVER	106,207
COMBAT SUPPORT	10,835
TOTAL COMBAT SUPPORT	117,042
ADMIN SERVICES	24,813
IRREGULARS	112,760

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POLITICAL	39,175
GRAND TOTAL	293,790

4. PROPOSED NEW FORMAT AND FIGURES ARE:

MANEUVER	106,207
COMBAT SUPPORT	10,835
ADMIN SERVICES	24,813
GUERRILLAS	60,750
ARMED FORCES TOTAL	202,605

POLITICAL STRENGTH (CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL)

80,000 ACCEPTED

140,000 POSSIBLE

5. PROPOSED FORMAT GIVES NO GRAND TOTAL. ALSO IT LEAVES OUT THE SELF-DEFENSE AND SECRET SELF-DEFENSE FORCES, WHICH MACV J-2 DRAFT STUDY GIVES AS 124,650. INCLUDING THESE FORCES, THE GRAND TOTAL OF ENEMY ORGANIZED STRENGTH IN SOUTH VIETNAM IS 407-255 ACCEPTED AND 467-255 POSSIBLE. THIS IS AT LEAST IN OUTFIELD OF SAME BALLPARK AS REFTEL'S SUGGESTION THAT TOTAL "IS IN 500,000 RANGE."

6. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF DROPPING SELF-DEFENSE FORCES IS TO PREVENT AWKWARD JUMP IN TOTAL FIGURE. SECONDARY REASONS, AND

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QUITE VALID IN OWN RIGHT, ARE (A) THAT SELF-DEFENSE FORCES ARE NOT SAME KIND OF AGGRESSIVE, FULL-TIME FORCE AS GUERRILLAS AND MAIN FORCES AND SHOULD NOT BE COUNTED IN SAME CATEGORY, AND (B) THAT INFORMATION ON SELF-DEFENSE AND SECRET SELF-DEFENSE STILL POOR AND SUBJECT TO DRASTIC CHANGE WHICH WOULD MAKE ENTIRE ENEMY ARMED FORCES FIGURE SUBJECT TO ABRUPT FLUCTUATION IN INCLUDED THEREIN. PLANNING STUDIES AND ESTIMATES WILL INCLUDE CURRENT FIGURE FOR SELF-DEFENSE TYPES.

7. OUR FEELING IS THAT IF THE CHANGE IN FORMAT WILL MAKE POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF MORE REALISTIC TOTALS AS PER PARAVZAPH FIVE ABOVE, THE DROPPING OF SELF-DEFENSE FORCES FROM RECAPITULATIONS FORMAT IS NOT TOO HIGH A PRICE TO PAY.

8. IF J-2, COMUSMACV, AND CINCPAC BUY THE PACKAGE, PLAN IS TO BRIEF MISSION COUNCIL 5 JUNE.

S E C R E T

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